TOWARD OUR NEW CENTURY

OUR VISION

Our vision is that of a province where no one is left behind on the path to opportunity, a province with an unbreakable social fabric, built on the foundation of diverse and growing communities, in a green and prosperous economy.

KEY INITIATIVES

A Green and Prosperous Economy

- Continue implementation of the province's new economic strategy, the *Saskatchewan Action Plan for the Economy: A New Century of Opportunity*, a plan developed by the people of Saskatchewan.
- Act upon recommendations of the Business Tax Review Committee and invest in programs that encourage new business entrepreneurs.
- Develop and implement a climate change and energy initiatives package that will contribute to an even greener and more prosperous economy.
- Pursue investment in additional heavy oil upgrading capacity, clean coal technologies, natural gas in coal and poly-generation opportunities.
- Establish an Asia-Pacific Desk in the Department of Industry and Resources to pursue opportunities in Asia.
- Fully fund the provincial share of the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program for 2005.
- Introduce a major multi-year northern road building strategy that includes an all weather road to the far north.

Diverse and Growing Communities

- Through the Saskatchewan "Energy Share" program help consumers this winter with the increased costs of heating, and provide support to homeowners who make energy-saving upgrades.
- Establish a new Building Communities Fund to meet the economic development, cultural, social and recreational needs of our province.

- Increase the film employment tax credit, enhancing the efforts of Saskatchewan's growing film and video industry to attract new productions.

An Unbreakable Social Fabric: No One Left Behind

- Provide support for midwifery services as part of multi-disciplinary teams in hospital and community settings, contributing to care that is safe, flexible and meets the needs of families.
- Increase support for the College of Medicine to train future doctors, and provide for major investment towards a new state-of-the art Academic Health Sciences Centre .
- Partnering with Aboriginal leaders, communities, police services and other agencies, develop an effective province-wide strategy for missing persons cases.
- Build on the recommendations of a comprehensive external review of the training and apprenticeship system in Saskatchewan to expand skills training and apprenticeship opportunities and ensure that our training system meets the needs of Saskatchewan people.
- Working with other provinces, territories, the federal government, and regional health authorities, develop a federal-provincial influenza pandemic plan.
- Continuing Saskatchewan's leadership in innovative justice practices, grow the Aboriginal Court for Northern Saskatchewan, implement a new police complaints process, expand our domestic violence courts, establish a Drug Treatment Court and make improvements to our Corner's Office.
- Provide additional funding of about $30 million over a three-year period to address issues of staff wages, recruitment and retention for community-based organizations.
- Act on the report of the *Commission on Improving Working Opportunities for All Saskatchewan Residents*.
- Establish a pre-kindergarten program for four-year-olds, and work to expand high quality and accessible child care throughout the province.
- Introduce a new Saskatchewan Youth Award, which will recognize the commitments and accomplishments of youth in the province.
- Introduce a Saskatchewan Seniors' Gold Card for residents 65 years of age and older, which will provide a source of information, and a passport to a variety of programs.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE 2005

Delivered on the Occasion of the Opening of

The Second Session of the Twenty-Fifth Legislature Province of Saskatchewan

Monday, November 7, 2005

The Honourable Lynda Haverstock
Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan

TOWARD OUR NEW CENTURY

106-01216/

MR. SPEAKER, MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, HONOURED GUESTS, PEOPLE OF SASKATCHEWAN.

Welcome to the second session of the 25th Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan. Welcome to the first session of Saskatchewan's second century.

In the first Speech from the Throne to the Legislative Assembly of the new Province of Saskatchewan on March 29, 1906, my predecessor, the Honourable A.E. Forget, declared that "an era of general prosperity has been entered upon, the limits of which can hardly be estimated."

Our ancestors were people of vision, courage and optimism. They dreamed of a prosperous land and a progressive society in a province richly blessed by nature's bounty.

Today, we take up the challenge posed by their example.

We are joined in the Assembly today by a number of Saskatchewan's centenarians and some of Canada's newest citizens. We welcome them.

Joining us as well, in the gallery are some of our youngest citizens and their parents. These children, born in 2005, are the sons and daughters of our Centennial.

My government's vision for our second century is best described through the eyes of these children. Today we dream of the province in which they will live, grow and reach adulthood.

It is the vision of my government that these children of our Centennial will live in a province that has clean water to drink, fresh air to breathe and beautiful landscapes to explore.

They will know Saskatchewan as a place that is dynamic, innovative and strong – a great place to live, work and raise a family.

They will live in a place that has embraced and marshaled technology in one of the most innovative, fair and competitive economies in the world: a province offering them abundant opportunities to pursue meaningful and rewarding careers.

It is my government's goal that the children of our Centennial will have the best possible chance to grow up free from addiction, lead healthy and active lifestyles, benefit from high quality education, and be actively involved in their communities.

It is my government's vision that they will live, grow and reach adulthood proud of Saskatchewan's diversity, proud of our strong First Nations and Métis culture and tradition, proud of the rich tapestry of people from all parts of the world who make Saskatchewan strong. And they will live together in harmony and respect, desiring for all, that which they wish for themselves.

We are in a time that we have never been, and in an age that we have never seen.

Our vision today shall be our legacy for our children.

Today, my government dreams of a province where no one is left behind on the path to opportunity, a province with an unbreakable social fabric, built on the foundation of diverse and growing communities, in a green and prosperous economy.

Economic Prosperity

Saskatchewan enjoys unprecedented economic momentum as we begin our second century.

Four years ago, Saskatchewan was one of eight 'have-not' provinces. Today, because of the vision and hard work of Saskatchewan people, we are a 'have' province, and the only 'have' province in Canada that does not charge its citizens a health care premium. We are a 'have' province with heart.

Saskatchewan values fiscal responsibility. Our province has received its 13th credit rating upgrade since 1995. Our children should not inherit financial burden. During this session my government will balance the budget and pay down debt.

The work that has turned Saskatchewan's economic recovery to economic leadership will continue, based on the *Saskatchewan Action Plan for the Economy: A New Century of Opportunity*, a plan developed by the people of Saskatchewan.

As our second century unfolds, Saskatchewan will have one of the most diverse business environments in the country. Private enterprise, co-operative enterprise and public enterprise will stimulate growth and create jobs.

In this session, recommendations from the Business Tax Review Committee will be acted upon. Investments in programs that encourage entrepreneurs will be made.

Active work will be undertaken to include more youth and Aboriginal people in the labour market and business sector. The recently announced Youth Opportunities Unleashed program will help support young entrepreneurs in rural communities, and the Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis Economic Development Program will involve even more Aboriginal residents in the economic mainstream.

We will work with First Nations and Métis people to ensure they become full participants, as employees, and as business partners, in the economic mainstream.

Environment

A healthy economy and a healthy future for our children depend on a healthy environment.

My government's vision for the land that sustains us, is a vision of a natural environment even more habitable and nourishing in 2025 than it is today.

The results of our Green Strategy consultations will be built upon by expanding conservation and recycling programs, and pursuing a more integrated approach to managing our water resources.

In the year ahead, a climate change and energy initiatives package will be developed and implemented, contributing to an even greener and more prosperous economy.

In 2006, Saskatchewan's provincial parks system will celebrate its 75th anniversary. Our parks will showcase clean and green practices, and our stewardship of protected land will be a lasting inheritance.

During this session, my government will continue a process of consultation with northerners toward the recognition of the Churchill River as one of Saskatchewan's natural legacies.

Central to Saskatchewan's green and prosperous economic future is our province's vast forest.

In the coming months, we will work tirelessly to address recent challenges in the forestry industry and we will work with industry to capture new opportunities in the forestry sector and its ever-changing marketplace. With the recent establishment of the Saskatchewan Forest Centre in Prince Albert, we are well-positioned to do so.

Agroforestry, including the growing of trees as crops, is underway. My government has a bold vision for the future of this industry. Over the next twenty years, the goal will be to transform ten per cent of the arable land of Saskatchewan to agroforestry, creating another sustainable industry in our province.

Saskatchewan will continue to be a leader in forestry management practices.

Energy and Mining

Today, Saskatchewan is leading the continent in the diversity and potential of its renewable and non-renewable energy sources.

To capture the energy of the wind, projects already underway will produce 172 megawatts of zero emission power, five per cent of Saskatchewan's electrical generation capacity, or enough for 73,000 homes.

Saskatchewan was the first province to legislate the use of cleaner burning ethanol-blended gasoline. Today, Saskatchewan is poised to become a major producer of grain-based ethanol with production facilities nearing completion in Lloydminster and Weyburn, in addition to existing production in Lanigan.

In the coming year, future opportunities with wind generation and ethanol production will be explored.

Today, hydro power contributes to our energy needs. Research and development in biomass, biodiesel, hydrogren, and solar power are also taking place in Saskatchewan.

Given our wealth of renewable energy resources, it is the vision of my government that by the third decade of this century, the children of our Centennial will live in a province where one-third of their energy needs are met by renewable energy sources, and Saskatchewan will lead the country in energy conservation practices.

Saskatchewan is also a province with many conventional energy riches. We already account for one-third of Canada's total energy production, primarily through our uranium, oil and gas. My government's recent work with industry partners has developed our primary energy resources to record levels. In the coming years, Saskatchewan's energy contribution will grow even larger.

My government foresees the need for, and will pursue investment in, additional heavy oil upgrading capacity, clean coal technologies, natural gas in coal, and poly-generation opportunities.

To reach these goals, government will work with industry partners to sharpen our competitive edge in the attraction of energy investment, pursue research and development through the Petroleum Technology Research Centre, and intensify efforts in enhanced oil recovery technologies. Saskatchewan will persist in achieving a Saskatchewan Energy Accord and a fair equalization formula with the federal government.

A strong Saskatchewan is good for all of Canada.

Today, Saskatchewan is a major player in Canada's mining and mineral industry. Mineral exploration expenditures have doubled each year since 2003. In potash alone, the incentive package established in April has triggered more than $570 million in investment intentions.

Saskatchewan's Athabasca Basin is currently the world's prime exploration district for high-grade uranium deposits. One of the richest uranium mines in the world is gearing up to go into production at Cigar Lake in 2007.

Continued growth and investment in our traditional mining sectors will be ensured, and we will pursue opportunities to expand the scope of mining in our province. Saskatchewan has one of the largest diamond bearing Kimberlite clusters in the world. We have rare earth elements used in the production of new technologies. Major markets await.

Manufacturing and Export

Over the next decade, it is my government's goal that the value of manufacturing shipments from Saskatchewan will double from both small and large manufacturing sectors. We are well on our way. Saskatchewan manufacturing shipments grew by twice the national average last year.

Working with our industrial and research parks, technology will be commercialized. A favourable investment climate for small business and manufacturing will be fostered.

A new, five-year operating agreement with Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership will assist new exporters and continually seek new opportunities. An Asia-Pacific Desk will be established in the Department of Industry and Resources to pursue opportunities in Asia.

In global trade, every opportunity to seek fair trade and a level playing field for our producers and exporters will be seized.

Research and Development

Praised as the social laboratory of Canada for generations, Saskatchewan's creativity has driven discovery and innovation in science, technology and industry throughout our history. Research and development will be even more important to our economy in our second century than it was in our first.

In the coming year, success will be built on the work of Saskatoon's Innovation Place and Regina's Research Park, and such innovators as our universities, the Canadian Light Source Synchrotron, the Petroleum Technology Research Centre, the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, the Saskatchewan Forest Centre, the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization and the Saskatchewan Research Council.

Saskatchewan is fast becoming known as the Science Province.

Agriculture

Saskatchewan's agricultural sector has benefited from significant technological and innovative advancements in the past century. Global trade, diversification, and changing demographics have also had major impacts on the industry.

In recent years, no other sector has faced such daunting challenges including a significant cost/price squeeze. Our history is inseparable from the farm economy, and the agricultural sector will continue to play a central role in our province's future.

As we build a successful future, livestock and grain production sectors will be vital. Farming in Saskatchewan will continue to evolve, and we will continue to be leaders in a changing world.

Guided by the recommendations of the Action Committee on the Rural Economy, and the advice of other leaders in the agricultural sector, we will facilitate further diversification to keep pace with growing opportunities.

Traditional and organic processing will be enhanced. Feedlot capacity in the province will be expanded.

In the coming months, the work being done around food processing opportunities, such as those at the University of Saskatchewan Food Centre will be highlighted, and investment in value-added food production will be pursued. Over the next two decades, the utilization of our abundant water resources will increase the potential of irrigated crops.

My government will fully fund the provincial share of the Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization (CAIS) program for 2005, while continuing to seek improvements to farm programs and a fairer share of national support for Saskatchewan farm families.

The land that has sustained past generations will sustain generations in the future.

Transportation

As our future unfolds, Saskatchewan's economy and standard of living will depend upon a solid transportation network.

During this session, the safety and efficiency of our transportation network will be improved by continuing the twinning of the TransCanada and Yellowhead highways, with an additional 40 kilometers in total to be open to traffic within a year.

My government will work with communities to support a short-line rail network that links with Canada's major railways and alternate grain handling facilities.

Our vast north has tremendous economic potential and transportation is essential in reaching that potential. In addition to connecting people with jobs, and industries with resources, northern roads are lifelines that connect families with education and healthcare services, and connect communities with each other and the world.

In September, a major new project connecting La Loche to Fort McMurray in Alberta was announced to link these northern communities. This is a good example of two provinces working together to build a stronger Canada.

In this session, my government will announce a major multi-year northern road building strategy that will include an all weather road to the far north. This work with northern residents and communities will enhance economic development and create new opportunities for prosperity.

As part of a long-term vision, the groundwork will be laid for twinning the highway between Prince Albert and Saskatoon, and for the further development of north-south corridors into the United States.

To honour all Saskatchewan Veterans, Highway #2 from Moose Jaw to Prince Albert will be named Veterans' Memorial Highway.

DIVERSE AND GROWING COMMUNITIES

Our provincial motto is *"from many peoples strength."* We want our children to grow up together in a Saskatchewan more diverse than ever before.

First Nations and Métis People

Our diversity is our strength. While there is much work left to do, we are working together to respect our strong First Nations and Métis traditions, cultures and teachings.

The upcoming meeting with First Ministers and Aboriginal leaders puts national focus on issues of great significance to Saskatchewan and ways of working more effectively to improve social and economic outcomes for First Nations and Métis people.

We are strengthening our relationships in an environment of mutual respect. This is demonstrated by working closely with First Nations and Métis people in the province, and by respecting and building upon their historic Treaty and constitutional relationships with the federal government.

Saskatchewan will have communities built upon the history and tradition of the First Nations, Métis and immigrant ancestors from centuries ago.

Immigration

Just as we did 100 years ago, Saskatchewan is turning again to the world and opening our doors to new immigrants.

In partnership with communities, businesses and immigrant families, the Saskatchewan Immigrant Nominee Program will identify and attract thousands of new immigrants to our workplaces, farms and businesses.

When the program is fully operational by 2008, my government expects approximately 5,000 new immigrants a year will make Saskatchewan their home.

Government will work with our settlement agencies, post-secondary institutions, occupational bodies, and other partners to connect newcomers to jobs, communities and cultural groups - to ease their transition and create a more welcoming atmosphere in which they will prosper and thrive.

Communities and Housing

In the future, Saskatchewan communities will be larger and more cosmopolitan, requiring sophisticated infrastructure and services, and safe and affordable housing.

In the years to come, HomeFirst, the province's five-year, $200 million strategy will bring safe, adequate, affordable housing and home ownership within reach for thousands of lower-income families.

In this session, my government will establish a new Building Communities Fund to meet the economic development, cultural, social and recreational needs of our province.

The province recognizes that municipalities provide a wide range of services to their residents, and will continue to work with municipalities to address revenue sharing needs. Efforts will be maintained with school divisions, municipalities and other stakeholders, to develop a long-term solution to education property tax relief that is in the best interests of students and taxpayers.

My government will also ensure that individuals and families have the support they need to deal with the rise of energy costs. My government has introduced the Saskatchewan "Energy Share" program to help consumers this winter with the increased costs of heating, and will provide support to homeowners who make energy-saving upgrades.

Culture and Tourism

Among Saskatchewan's most attractive features are the creative and cultural accomplishments of its people and its communities.

Saskatchewan is known both nationally and internationally as a destination for visitors in search of natural beauty, eco-tourism, and First Nations and Métis cultural experiences. There will be growing recognition of Saskatchewan as a world-class venue for major sporting and cultural events.

Building on the success of Saskatchewan's Centennial Gala, over the coming months, my government will continue to pursue the attraction of major Canadian music events for a year of artistic celebration in 2007.

Supporting the social and economic vitality of our communities and regions, government will build and support cultural industries in the province.

In 2006, the 100th anniversary of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum and the 15th anniversary of our Saskatchewan Communications Network will be celebrated.

Saskatchewan's film and video industry, already equipped with state-of-the art production facilities, is flourishing because of our vast landscapes, historical venues and creative, talented and professionally trained people.

Support for Saskatchewan's film and video industry in its efforts to attract new productions will be enhanced through increases in the film employment tax credit. We will make the home of Corner Gas even more competitive and successful.

Saskatchewan has always been a cradle of creativity, and will always be a natural and welcoming home for artists of all disciplines.

We value for our children culturally rich and diverse communities in which they can live and grow.

AN UNBREAKABLE SOCIAL FABRIC: NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

Building on sound environmental stewardship and economic momentum, over the next twenty years this government envisions a Saskatchewan with an unbreakable social fabric. My government is determined that on the path to future opportunity and prosperity, no one will be left behind.

This social fabric relies heavily on the commitment, dedication and generosity of volunteers. Through the Premier's Voluntary Sector Initiative, the province is formalizing its long-standing relationship with the thousands of organizations that comprise our voluntary sector. Government acknowledges the invaluable contribution of the voluntary sector – and individual volunteers throughout the province – to our quality of life.

Health

The birthplace of Medicare will continue to be the model jurisdiction of publicly funded, universal health care, with fully integrated, modern services and facilities.

For the children of today and the children of tomorrow, good health begins early.

Over the years, government has heard from many, calling for new services in midwifery. In the coming months, support for midwifery services will be provided. Midwives will offer their skill and training as part of multi-disciplinary teams in hospital and community settings, contributing to care that is safe, flexible and meets the needs of families.

Work will continue with community service providers to support families with programs such as KidsFirst to ensure infants get the healthiest start in life.

Pediatric services across the province will be enhanced by the development of a Children's Hospital. This centre of excellence for pediatric care, to be located in Saskatoon, will be a children's hospital within a hospital, and will feature child-centred, concentrated expertise and an integrated approach to care.

The training of our health care professionals must be ensured to meet the needs of the province. To this end, support for the College of Medicine to train future doctors will increase. A new state-of-the-art Academic Health Sciences Centre will bring health science educators, researchers and students together in one facility. In this session, a major investment will be made toward this project.

A forward-looking strategy for training, retraining and recruiting physicians, nurses and other health professionals, will be released this year. There will be particular attention paid to ensuring that trained young people are able to find work in Saskatchewan's health care system.

Renewal of our health infrastructure is necessary to provide safe patient care and safe working conditions. Construction is underway, or will soon begin, on health facilities in Ile-a-la-Crosse, Herbert, Outlook, Regina, Maidstone, Preeceville, Humboldt, Swift Current, Moosomin, Saskatoon and Yorkton.

Recognizing that substance abuse wreaks personal, social and economic havoc, my government will place a high priority on the implementation of the Premier's Project Hope, a three-year plan to prevent and treat substance abuse in this province — an initiative that was acknowledged recently by the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

Saskatchewan's surgical wait list is declining. Timely and appropriate surgical care continues to be a priority for the province, a goal that we are achieving with the support of the health regions, physicians and other health care providers.

To meet growing needs, diagnostic imaging capacity has been enhanced by the addition of equipment and expansion of hours of operation. Capacity has increased by 80 per cent from five years ago and by the end of March 2006, MRI capacity will have increased by over 100 per cent.

Safety and Security

An unbreakable social fabric requires that our communities and neighbourhoods are safe. Criminal activity is not tolerated and gangs are not welcome in Saskatchewan. My government will work with the RCMP, municipal police services and communities to disrupt and dismantle organized criminal groups.

In this session, legislation will be introduced to curtail gang activity, and empower police to combat organized crime. Ways will be examined to discourage the recruitment of gang members.

In this session, government, Aboriginal leaders, communities, police services and other agencies will partner to develop an effective province-wide strategy for missing person cases. This strategy will include a task force and other initiatives to empower citizens to combat domestic and other violence. Further, it will ensure that sufficient resources are provided to the police so that investigations of violence or missing persons are never closed in Saskatchewan until they are solved.

Continuing Saskatchewan's leadership in innovative justice practices, the Aboriginal Court for northern Saskatchewan will expand, a new police complaints process will be implemented, our domestic violence courts will grow, a Drug Treatment Court will be established, and improvements will be made to our Coroner's Office.

This past year, Saskatchewan faced emergencies related to severe weather, such as widespread flooding, including in the Cumberland House, Arborfield and Lloydminster regions. We will work with communities as they continue to rebuild. Funding for the Provincial Disaster Assistance Program is being increased this year to assist in these efforts.

In the year to come, our emergency management system will be strengthened through provincial, community and regional delivery of protection and emergency services.

In addition, work is continuing with other provinces, territories, the federal government, and regional health authorities to develop a federal-provincial influenza pandemic plan.

It is my government's vision our children will grow up in safe and secure neighbourhoods and communities.

Working People

Even in the midst of today's unprecedented prosperity, some workers do not earn enough income to adequately provide for themselves and their families. Many workers are without health and pension benefits.

As the children of our Centennial enter their working years, it is my government's vision that no one in the Province of Saskatchewan will work for wages that leave them in poverty, and that every worker in Saskatchewan will have full access to health care and pension benefits.

My government is moving ahead on its three-year commitment to increase the minimum wage, enhance protection for health care workers and firefighters, and better support the balance of work and family.

Over the coming months, my government looks forward to receiving the report of the *Commission on Improving Work Opportunities for Saskatchewan Residents*. My government will act on the Report.

Community-based organizations, and their workers, provide a critical array of services such as group homes for persons with intellectual disabilities, vocational centres serving persons with disabilities, child care, and mobile crisis units for children and families.

In order to ensure the stability and effectiveness of community-based services to the public, additional funding of about $30 million over a three-year period will be provided to address issues of staff wages, recruitment and retention for these agencies.

Education

As our economy and labour markets grow, Saskatchewan has an opportunity to ensure that all of our people benefit from the prosperity being created.

To take full advantage of these opportunities, Saskatchewan people need to have the tools to succeed at every stage of life.

All children should have the best possible early learning and child care experiences, and today's families should have the necessary support and assistance in their communities. To this end, a pre-kindergarten program for four-year-olds will be established and work will be undertaken to expand high quality and accessible child care throughout the province.

My government's goal is that by the time the children of our Centennial graduate from high school, Saskatchewan will lead the country in educational achievement and literacy rates.

Our newly restructured school divisions, and the newly established Literacy Commission, are well-positioned to support this goal.

Skills training and apprenticeship opportunities will be expanded to ensure that our training system meets the needs of Saskatchewan people. In the coming months, there will be work to build on the recommendations of a comprehensive external review of the training and apprenticeship system in this province.

My government will work with Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions, including our universities, SIAST, regional colleges and First Nations and Métis institutions, to ensure that students have access to affordable and high quality learning opportunities that build careers here, and meet critical labour needs of our province.

Youth

Saskatchewan's young people are deeply involved in our communities and workplaces, shaping this province's future. For example, with government, young people participate in the Provincial Youth Advisory Committee, the GradWorks Intern Development program, the Leaders of Tomorrow program and Saskatchewan's Green Team.

My government will introduce new Saskatchewan Youth Award, to recognize the commitments and accomplishments of youth in the province and to show appreciation for those young people who have dedicated their time and talents to communities across Saskatchewan.

Seniors

As we look forward to our new century, we are reminded of those who have brought us to this day – our seniors, our elders. With respect and pride, we salute and thank them. They deserve the best in their quality of life and health care, with full opportunity to participate in the lives of their families and communities.

In the coming months, to acknowledge our seniors and elders, my government will introduce a Saskatchewan Seniors' Gold Card for residents 65 years of age and older. This will provide a source of information, and a passport to a variety of programs.

Conclusion

The year 2005 has been one of celebration and homecoming, of thoughtful reflection on our proud history and eager anticipation of our future.

In the volun' er capital of Canada, we celebrated our co-opera ive an_ ommunity spirit, our exemplary work ethic, and our famous qualities of compassion and generosity. With a team of 6,000 volunteers, we played host to young athletes and artists from across the country for the Jeux du Canada Games.

We celebrated with Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh.

We celebrated our artists in a gala event, we paddled the North and walked the South, and we honoured First Nations and Métis Women, Veterans and the peace-keepers of today.

We celebrated with our elders. We celebrated with our children.

We lit the living skies with fireworks to usher in a new century.

We celebrated our connections to this land, our connections to one another and our connections to the whole human family.

We celebrated our place in Canada.

From the ruggedly beautiful forests and lakes of our breathtaking north, to the fertile hills and plains of our parklands, to what native son W.O. Mitchell described as the skeleton requirements of land and sky, the magnificent Saskatchewan prairie, we celebrated our birthright in a land of natural wealth and wonder.

As we embark on our second century, let us consider how best to secure the birthright of the children of our Centennial.

As we move toward our new century, let us build together a green and prosperous economy, and diverse and growing communities with an unbreakable social fabric. Let us build a province where no one is left behind on the path to opportunity.

Twenty years from now, as we do today, may the children of our Centennial sing together, "we are many, we are one.... we love this place, Saskatchewan."

May divine providence continue to bless our province and guide this Assembly in all its deliberations.

God bless Saskatchewan. God bless Canada. God Save the Queen.